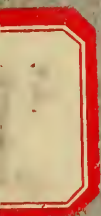




Ecce adas in
home
Sweet
home





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CICADAS IN HOME, SWEET
HOME.



CICADAS
IN **H**OME
SWEET **H**OME

By Alfred Lambourne



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ALFRED LAMBOURNE.

To Minnie

CICADAS IN HOME, SWEET HOME.

I.



FLOAT in melody, I drift
with song;

Music's sweet notes enrich
the night around,

And summer's hosts their
tireless cry prolong;

A piercing, crisp, intense, sharp, blade-
like sound,

Yet clear it melts, as for some magic balm
With deathless harmonies of Home,
Sweet Home.

Ah! true those symbols are—for Home
the palm,

The cactus and the sands for those who
roam!

And as I list unto the insects shrill,
Ecstatic dwellers mid the vines and trees,
All thoughts of deep content my bosom
fill;

Dear love, I weep while soft you touch
the keys:

Unto this moment fleeting, I could say
With Faust, "Thou art so fair—ah, still
delay!"

II.



H, still delay, thou present
moment fair!

From welcome bondage, spare
that I go free;

A richest vesture thou for me
dost wear;

Like island affluent in life's charmed sea,
Now the cicada's high and ceaseless din,
I hear with words and tune immortal
blend;

The soft transcriptions draw it all within;
A round doth make, a current without end.

O, not mine own, another's fond content,
Has caused to fall a slow, unbidden tear.

Willing I cling unto imprisonment,
That I go thence, indeed my only fear:

All harmony within this moment lies—

In Home, Sweet Home, "The Earthly
Paradise."

III.



AIL, Earthly Paradise! where
true love takes
Terrestrial reflex of the hea-
venly mood;
That cherished spot where
symphony awakes,
And stills the discord of earth's clamor
rude!
Hark! once again from out the unseen
room
Those words undying come, and ripple
slow;
As here I sit amid nocturnal gloom,
Upon mine ear the tender measures
grow.
And sounds like steel from out the dark-
ness flash—
The wakeful creatures, happy of the night;
Like tiny scimetars the keen notes clash;
Assail the gloom as though it were with
light;
All rhythmic sound the echoes in my
breast,
In Home, Sweet Home, love's Island of
the Blest.

IV.



THE Island Blest, the Lotus
Land of Peace,
The golden refuge, lie in
Home, Sweet Home,
That song which holds the
human heart in lease;

Its power I learn beneath night's star-lit
dome.

What dearer moment can the future give,
Than this, wherein a thousand transports
crowd?

The loves of dead ancestors once more
live,

Within my heart they call to me aloud.

Is this the issue of some happy plot,
That through the song darts swift the
insect's cry?

No more I seek, nor need for mine allot,
While voice beloved and omen sweetly vie:
Apart this moment is from pain's abyss,
As Fields of Lethe from the Walls of Dis!

V.



THE Fields Lethean are this
moment mine,

As though my soul emerged
from out that wave

By that bright shore, where
starry clusters shine,

Those flowers whose roots in mystic
waters lave.

A sweet forgetfulness from self I find,
Lost 'mid the cadences of verse and song;
The overflow from one glad heart, com-
bined

With gleeful clamor of night's winged
throng.

Here let me rest, nor leave this hallowed
goal;

O, rather bid me all the world forsake !

These harmonies hath made my being
whole,

A cure hath wrought upon my every ache:
In Lethe's stream there lies a mystic
power—

In Home, Sweet Home, the brightest
earthly flower.

VI.



N Home, Sweet Home, the
flower of Lethe lies,
The bright adornment of
love's shining fields;

In Home, Sweet Home, the
world's loud tumult dies,

A rich nepenthe there the spirit shields.
Safe the cicadas, wrapt in summer ease,
Amid their verdant coverts tireless sing;
In Home, Sweet Home, my soul finds all
appease,
As thrilling words meet to responsive
string.

Quick, through the tender, soft melodic
chord,

Each tiny rival fierce staccato thrusts;
The frenzied mirth of night's vehement
horde,

To lull all pain, the long held note ad-
justs:

Dear to my heart the wild, shrill serenade,
And Home, Sweet Home, the flower no
sun can fade.

VII.



THE serenade which I this moment hear—

Loud edged notes the glad night-watcher makes,

And that loved song which ties of home endear,

From out unfathomed heart of nature breaks.

A noise obstreperous the insects raise.

Bright contrast to euphonic, flowing tones;

That chorus wild, amid the leafy maze,

Is answered now from sweetest of all thrones.

O, oft the rambler neath some alien pine,

Has felt his heart at that wild chorus burn!

O, oft the rover on the stormy brine

At those sweet words, has longed for swift return!

O, unappeased desires have now rebound,

I live and breath upon enchanted ground!

VIII.



ALL enchantment lies in
Home, Sweet Home !
What power can break the
love-accepted chains ?
Its call is heard o'er ocean's
leagues of foam,—

No bar the pathless woods, nor desert
plains.

These sounds of revel, swift, acute and
loud,

I've heard where other vines their leaves
unfurl,

These melting lines have listed with the
crowd

Upon the streets amid the cities' whirl.

O, then, what tumult in my heart was
housed,

A strange unrest to these sharp notes akin;
What yearnings infinite the song aroused,
As sorrow dwelt my troubled heart within:
Afar from home the cypress boughs en-
twine.

In Home, Sweet Home, the myrtle wreath
is mine.

IX.



S cypress boughs, O sad the
thoughts that sway,
From Home, Sweet Home
the absent one with fear;
In solitude the longing heart
must weigh

The sum of that, which now I listen here.
Now nature speaks and blends itself with
art,
And no false note where thought to voice
is true.

Unconscious all, each singer takes a part,
And ere they die the symphonies renew.
Shrill dwellers of the vine, thy notes dis-
perse,
And thou, loved voice, for absence make
atone;

O would that I this moment might coerce
Through golden law and make it all mine
own:

O, sorrow now like to an old moon wanes,
In Home, Sweet Home, where sweet con-
tentment reigns.

X.



H, sweet content but dwells in
Home, Sweet Home,
Nor in the world, nor in the
prospect wide;
Within the cottage of the
weary mome,

It reigns as oft as in the halls of pride.
Sing, ye cicadas, housed amid the green,
Make a shrill music as to some deep spell,
What other than mine own can thy joy
mean?

And yet, I know mine own doth thine
excel.

Thou, too, beloved, O sing sweet notes
and high,

Here shall I learn where true love must
abide,

Blend song and word with those wild
singers nigh;

Here lives my hope, whatever may betide:
Sing, happy singers—sweetest of all
themes

Is Home, Sweet Home, the golden Land
of Dreams !

XI.



N Land of Dreams, O golden
harbor bright,
Not here the promise of the
heart shall fail:

This anchorage for struggle
makes requite,

Rest now my bark, and furl the useless
sail.

When saddened days the skies of life trans-
form,

Then, Home, Sweet Home, no haven like
to thee;

When gathered clouds presage the coming
storm,

Here is my calm, and here my rest shall
be.

Trill, happy creatures, anchored in the
vine,

Sharp on the night the vocal gladness falls,

As voice and string I hear in melting line,

Love unto love, as deep to deep, it calls:

Ah, insects' cry, and chord, and note, and
voice,

Sweet rivalry to make my heart rejoice.

XII.



DEJOICE, my heart, in this
sweet rivalship,
Thy measures make amid the
glad acclaim.
Caressed each word that
dwells upon the lip,
And sweetly wild, night's watchers shrill
proclaim.
Hark, how vociferous the notes they shake--
The keen cicadas, happy in the strife !
And list, ah list,—as clear for gladness
sake—
Sweet word and melody awake to life !
O, shall I sink though heavy weight op-
press—
While sounds of concord, strength and
hope shall give ?
O, all forgotten now each wan distress,
While these bright words and tuneful
echoes live:
This moment fleeting, blissful peace re-
news,
In Home, Sweet Home, where love comes
like the dews.

XIII.



HE dews of gentle peace, and
song, and verse,
For me in this bright present
focussed are;
This moment fair and passing
they immerse,
As yonder heavens doth my natal star.
O, what these melodies that upward steal,
And by keen, shrilly notes are pierced
through ?
Their potent charm and sweet control I
feel,
As fateful power from out the skies they
drew.
Of Pleiades, O, naught the sway can bind,
And so this moment bears my star's im-
press;
These sounds of joy my inmost bosom
find,
My soul doth touch as with a soft caress:
Until that time I sleep beneath the loam,
I'll love cicada's song, and Home, Sweet
Home.

XIV.



NTIL within the narrow house
I sleep,
Time shall not steal this moment prodigal;
While life is mine, securely
will I keep

Its song, and riot, and heart-festival;
Yes, from the thief, remembrance shall
hold back

Those strains of Home, Sweet Home that
softly glide;

Those ardent notes and keen, that never
slack

And, with proclaimings, song and night
divide.

O, sing loved voice, and fingers deftly
stray,

Press light the keys, the eager heart as-
suage!

And thou, wild rioters on branch and spray;

With verse and melody thy contest wage:

Sweet moment live, till life for me is past,

And time to silence gives my heart at last.

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